

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a Notice of Allowability upon examination of the above-identified application on the merits. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. Claims 1-20 are allowed.
3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As per claim 1, the prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach a second guide for assisting the centering of the dummy substrate, the second guide centering the dummy substrate by being engaged with the first guide with respect to the placing table while the dummy substrate is transferred onto the placing table by the transfer mechanism and attaining detection values of an eccentricity and an eccentric direction of the dummy substrate by using the detector and then obtaining the transfer shift of the transfer mechanism based on the detection values.

As per claim 11, the prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach a second guide for assisting the centering of the dummy substrate, the second guide centering the dummy substrate with respect to the placing table by

being engaged with the first guide while the dummy substrate is transferred onto the placing table by the transfer mechanism and attaining detection values of an eccentricity and an eccentric direction of the dummy substrate by using the detector and then obtaining the transfer shift of the transfer mechanism based on the detection values.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Priority

4. Applicant's claim for the benefit of a prior-filed application under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121, or 365(c) is acknowledged. Applicant has complied with one or more conditions for receiving the benefit of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 365(c).
5. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

6. The examiner has considered the information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 13 November 2007 and 7 September 2006.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The following references are cited to further show the state of the art with respect to transport control of substrates between manufacturing stations:

USPN 7,129,147 B2 to Kumagai et al.

USPN 6,950,721 B2 to Tashiro et al.

USPN 6,742,980 B2 to Sasaki

USPN 6,697,145 B1 to Aoyama

USPN 6,592,673 B2 to Welch et al.

USPN 6,400,445 B2 to Nishi et al.

USPN 6,257,045 B1 to Hosokawa et al.

USPN 6,203,617 B1 to Tanoue et al.

USPN 5,740,034 to Saeki

US Pub. No. 2004/0230341 A1 to Suh et al.

US Pub. No. 2004/0043513 A1 to Ishizawa et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Crystal J. Barnes-Bullock whose telephone number is 571.272.3679. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday alternate Mondays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Albert Decady can be reached on 571.272.2100. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Crystal J. Barnes-Bullock/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2121
CJB
30 March 2008